Features of 'India Telephone Card'

2262. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL has introduced a 'India Telephone Cards' to spur growth in both post-paid and landline segment;

(b) the unique and specific features of the 'India Telephone Card';

(c) how many subscribers have taken up the 'India Telephone Card';

(d) whether BSNL had set a very ambitious target for the 'India Telephone Card'; and

(e) if so, the details of targets and actual achievements made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. BSNL has introduced 'India Telephone Card' since December, 1998.

(b) India Telephone Card (ITC) is a convenient prepaid card giving customer the freedom to make local, STD or ISD calls from any telephone, even from a STD or ISD barred phone. ITC cards can also be used to make calls from BSNL mobile phones. These cards give customer the facility of account balance information with real-time credit supervision.

(c) The number of active ITC card holders is 31,29,850.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. BSNL has set a country wide target of sale of ITC cards amounting to about Rs. 161 crores for the period December, 2004 to March, 2005 only. However, sale of ITC cards in the current financial year from April, 2004 to October, 2004 has been about Rs. 146 crores.

Complaints on Roharu Telephone Exchange

†2263. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether all employees working at Roharu Telephone Exchange of Shimla in Himachal Pradesh and at 12-13 sub-telephone exchanges under it work arbitrarily without caring for local people and sent wrong reports to the Ministry;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of action Government are taking against such negligent officers, and the reasons for not attending the complaints made by people on time; and

(c) the reasons for certain telephone numbers getting out of order repeatedly and the details of complaints registered from January, 2004 till date and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does Not arise in view of (a) above

(c) The fault rate and fault clearance in Roharu Telephone Exchange is satisfactory. However, a few telephones are getting out of order repeatedly as these are working on long overhead alignments passing through thick forests and orchards. These alignments get affected due to inclement weather and sometimes are also tampered by villagers. The restoration is done promptly in case of any fault.

1543 complaints were registered from 1st January, 2004 to 30th November, 2004 which were attended to within reasonable time.

French Foreign Minister's India visit

2264. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any breakthrough has been made during the visit of French Foreign Minister with regard to the pending issues;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there would be any cooperation between two countries in regard for enhancing civilian nuclear interests; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) During the French Foreign Minister's visit to India in October, 2004 we reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual concern.